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Trend employment growth in Australia eases

Trend employment growth in Australia eased from the relatively strong growth seen in late 2015, according to figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

In March 2016, the annual trend employment growth rate was 2.2 per cent, down from 2.6 per cent in December 2015. That's an increase of around 250,000 persons employed, compared with 300,000 persons.

"In March 2016, the trend employment to population ratio remained at 61.2 per cent. This reflects an increase over the year from 60.8 per cent to 61.2 per cent, while over the same period the unemployment rate decreased from 6.2 per cent to 5.8 per cent," General Manager of ABS' Macroeconomic Statistics Division, Bruce Hockman said.

Over the past month, trend employment increased by 7,700 persons to 11,910,000 persons, which equated to a monthly growth rate of 0.10 per cent. This monthly growth rate was below the monthly average over the past 20 years (0.15 per cent), and down from the rate of 0.25 per cent in September 2015.

The trend monthly hours worked in all jobs series decreased by 1.8 million hours (0.11 per cent) to 1,643.7 million hours.

The trend series smooth the more volatile seasonally adjusted estimates and provide the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market.

The seasonally adjusted number of persons employed increased by 26,100 in March 2016, while the number of persons unemployed decreased by 7,300. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March 2016 was 5.7 per cent (down 0.1 percentage points) and the seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate remained at 64.9 per cent.

More details are in the March 2016 issue of Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0), as well as the upcoming March 2016 issue of Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) due for release on April 21. These publications are available for free download (after release) from the ABS website - www.abs.gov.au

Media note:

- When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.
- Media requests and interviews - contact the ABS Communications Section on 1300 175 070 (8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri).
- The ABS produces trend estimates to provide a more reliable indicator of the underlying behaviour of the Labour Force series. Trend estimates were introduced into the Labour Force series in the mid 1980s and are available back to February 1978. Trend estimates

are considered the best indicators of the underlying behaviour in the labour market. See paragraphs 28 to 37 of the Explanatory Notes in Labour Force, Australia (cat. no. 6202.0).

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